

THE
NECESSITY
OF
REPEALING

THE
American Stamp-Act
DEMONSTRATED:

OR,

A PROOF that GREAT-BRITAIN must be
injured by that Act.

In a LETTER to a MEMBER of the BRITISH
HOUSE of COMMONS.

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THE
N E C E S S I T Y

R E F R A I N I N G

A M E R I C A N S

D E M O N S T R A T I N G



A P A R T I C U L A R I N S T A N C E O F T H E
I M P O R T A N C E O F T H E A C T

I N A L E T T E R O F T H E M E M B E R S O F T H E B R I T I S H
H O U S E O F C O M M O N S

L O N D O N

P R I N T E D B Y J. J. JOHNSON, ST. PAULS CHURCH-YARD
1793

T H E

NECESSITY, &c.

S I R,

AS the tax which has lately been laid on our American colonies is like to come under the review of parliament some time this session, and as I lately arrived from North America, where I resided several years ; I beg leave, with all dutiful submission, to give you my sentiments on that subject. If I am so happy as to cast any light upon a question of so much importance, I am certain of your approbation, and shall have rendered the greatest service in my power to the public.

From the assiduous care of our present ministry to restore commerce and satisfaction to every branch of His Majesty's dominions, there is great reason to believe they will recommend a *repeal*, or at least some considerable *alterations* of the American Stamp-Act : and as some weighty arguments now offer against that Act, which could not have been foreseen when it was made, there is the greatest reason to believe the parliament in general will come into one or other of these measures.

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It is a pity that any who treat of American affairs, should ever handle them as if they had no desire to find out truth, nor any thing else in view, than to irritate or stir up one part of His Majesty's dominions against another, by affecting to espouse the cause of one, while they load the other with the most opprobrious language ; as if it were possible, that the interest of Great-Britain and her colonies could be separated, much less opposite to one other : I have ever considered their connexion like that which subsists between the natural body and its members ; if the members suffer, the body must suffer also. For this reason, we should not barely consider how the Stamp-Act may affect our American colonies, but how it must affect the future strength and prosperity of His Majesty's dominions : And, pursuing this plan, I hope to prove even to a demonstration, That

It is for the Interest of Great Britain, that the Stamp-Act should be repealed.

In the course of this proof, it is hardly necessary for me to enquire what *Right* the parliament of Great Britain may have to tax our American colonies ; especially as the parliament has, at any time, the *Power* of resolving that question. Yet, as I shall have occasion to mention the present disposition of our colonies towards the Stamp-Act, it may not be improper to shew, That they have at least the *Appearance* of reason for their complaints.

I. It is said, The colonies are under great obligations to Britain for the expence she has been at, in planting and supporting them ; in particular, the blood and treasure we spent, during the late war, on *their account*, has brought them greatly in our debt. Hence it is proper they should be taxed, to refund some part of those expences.

II. That a standing army is necessary in the colonies, and it is proper they should be taxed for its support.

III. That Great-Britain being involved in debt, and loaded with taxes, it is proper her colonies should support some share of the burthen. I suppose one or other of these reasons, (for I have not read the Preamble to the Stamp-Act) induced the parliament to tax our colonies. They shall be considered in order.—

It is a general opinion, that our North American colonies are greatly indebted to Britain for the expence of planting them, and for the blood and treasure we have spent, during the late war, on *their account*.

Our colonists are certainly indebted to the most righteous prince that ever swayed a scepter, together with his royal ancestors, for their enjoyment of every liberty, civil and religious, that might conduce to the prosperity of any people.—And, in return, they have paid the most affectionate loyalty, and have ever appeared ready to spend the last drop of their blood, whenever His Majesty's honor,

nor, or the safety of his dominions, required their assistance: But as to pecuniary obligations between them and Great-Britain, I humbly presume, the Ballance is in their favour.

There was a time when their fore-fathers * in Britain, being neither allowed to enjoy civil or religious liberty, rather than resist the powers that were, requested that they might retreat into the wilderness of America, and were graciously allowed to possess a tract of land, which cost Great-Britain nothing, and which was really the property and possession of its native savages: Thither they went, and at the expence of their own money and their own blood, subdued the natives, and converted a wilderness into a fruitful country, which is now a valuable part of the British empire. Our parliament ever since so conducted matters, by prohibitions and restrictions on their trade, that these infant colonies alone have served the purpose of *increasing* our subjects, *maintaining* our poor, *strengthening* our navy, *consuming* our manufactures, and returning us the annual profit of immense sums. Does it hence appear that they have contracted any debt with Great-Britain? While some of us were rolling in affluence and ease, others
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* In this case, as well as when I speak of the virtue, industry, or temperance of our colonists; of the blood they have spent during the late war; of their country producing all the necessaries of life; of the annual sum they may be supposed to pay by a Stamp Act, &c. in general, when I speak of our colonists, I mean those on the continent of America, and not those in our West Indian Islands, as the latter are a perfect contrast to the former.

wearing themselves out with dissipation and vice, and thousands making a prey of one another; if their fathers, by a singular fortitude and virtue, braved the fury of the seas, and danger or death in every form, from famine and the sword, among wild beasts and savages; if they have, by the most arduous labour, changed that wilderness into a source of endless wealth to Great Britain, does it from thence follow, that they are under great obligations to us? I should think the contrary. But the colonies are said to be greatly in our debt, for the blood and treasure we have spent *on their account*, during the late war. Perhaps even this account is pretty well settled; but that we may form a proper judgment on this subject, which is so often mentioned, it will be necessary to review the cause and event of that war: The facts are these, — our British North American colonies are extended along the shore near 2000 miles, and backwards not 200 miles, upon an average: The limits of these colonies are fixed by charter, and several of them are already full, though not very thick settled. An immeasurable territory lies behind these colonies, which is not theirs, nor did they ever claim it; their charter gave them no pretensions to such a claim: It is the territory of Great Britain, never yet located, nor granted to any particular subject. It was natural to suppose and expect, that soon as the bounds of her present colonies were all peopled, she would also divide this wilderness

wilderness into other colonies, which might become a new source of riches and power. But the French had perfidiously surrounded our present colonies by a chain of forts, and thereby must have cut off all hopes of future increase to our dominions: in this case it was the interest of Great-Britain, it was absolutely necessary for her to remove the French; and removed they were, by a glorious and successful conflict; but did the Britons alone bleed during that war, or did they alone bear the expence? No Sir, brave and generous as the Britons were, the Colonists have not been a whit behind them.

A single colony which was planted about 90 years ago, paid near half a million towards the general expence: the four New-England colonies alone raised and supported 20000 men *per annum*, and it appears from good evidence, that they lost near 3000 men during the service. In general, this war has made such havock from one end to the other of our infant colonies, that the flower of their youth are destroyed, and the survivors loaded with taxes, to pay the debts which were then contracted. In return for this profusion of blood, our colonists have obtained the security of their present estates; they have also acquired perpetual honor to the British arms, and a vast addition of empire to the kingdom, whose subjects they are. But all these acquisitions being chiefly imaginary, can never help them to pay greater taxes than

than formerly ; and I confess, it does not appear that they have made any other acquisitions. It is true, that several French and Spanish colonies are added to our dominions upon the continent, together with a vast extent of wilderness, but that is nothing to the present colonists : their land is *decreased*, and not increased in value by these additions, and their trade is *worse* instead of better ; for the more land is to be purchased on the continent, so much the less will any purchaser give for what is now occupied, the greater possessions we have on the continent of North America, and the greater quantity of indigo, rice, tobacco, hemp, flax, furr, and timber that are thence imported, so much less must each colony gain by her trade in these articles, and these are the commodities with which they pay their taxes. Who then have been gainers by our late war in America ? The answer is plain, Great Britain has gained exceedingly.

It is long since the neat balance of trade with our colonies was *half a million* per annum in favour of Great Britain, and by our late acquisitions in America, it must soon become *a million*, I apprehend this is more than we gain by our trade in every other part of the world. Thus it appears that so much blood and treasure was spent during the late war, on the account, almost *the sole account of Great Britain*, and not of the colonies. And whoever considers the colonists in a just point of view, will confess they have done more than
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could have been expected, as they really have done more than was ever required towards the support of the late war.

Every new acquisition on the continent, must be entirely subservient to the purposes of Great Britain, as our American colonists always have been. These people are in general hardy, temperate and industrious, hence they have already opened an immense trade, the Profits of which, every shilling, centers in this Island. As their country produces every thing in abundance that is necessary for the preservation of life, they might carry on a profitable trade at any foreign market. But this is not proper, nor is it permitted; our parliaments have so hedged them in with laws, restrictions, and prohibitions, that by their utmost industry, they can hardly pay their debts; furr is a valuable article, and a trade in hats would have been highly profitable for them; to prevent this, we have prohibited their sending hats even from one colony to another. This is the case of wool, and other articles of like consequence. Copper mines they have in abundance, but we have taken care, by proper regulations, to reap the chief profits arising from them; their houses are universally covered with wood, almost in the shape of flat tiles, hence they have an extraordinary consumption of nails, but we do not indulge them in the use of slitting mills, lest they should make nails for themselves, and thereby hurt our manufacture. I need hardly

hardly mention that they are not allowed to use any foreign manufacture, but as it comes thro' our hands, encreased in price by public duties, and the private gain of our merchants, by which means they pay us a pretty heavy tax. Nor need I mention that there are numberless articles, the produce of their country, which they are not allowed to send even to Great Britain, on any account, lest they should hurt the price of like commodities in this island. It would be tedious to mention the several restrictions we have laid on their trade, restrictions nevertheless, which the Americans can easily bear, as they are only negative, yet the trade of this island could not have flourished if they had been neglected. Thus we have always been able to convert the industry and trade of our colonists into the riches and strength of their mother country. Now, Sir, as it is plain that our colonies in North America have hitherto served us, or rather they have been taxed by us, to the value of half a million per annum, that they have assisted us at the expence of much blood and treasure to acquire new colonies, by which *we alone* are to be profited, it seems cruel to make them suffer again for our advantage, by compelling them to refund our expences in the war.

II. It is further said, that *a standing army should be stationed in our colonies, and they should be taxed for its support.* But I confess it does not appear to me why we should tax our English colonies in

NorthAmerica, for the support of a standing army; for this army is to be stationed there either on account of the English colonies, or on account of the French and Spanish ones, which we have lately conquered; it is evidently improper that our English colonists should be taxed for the support of an army which is designed to keep other colonies in subjection. I have heard an old maxim which seems founded on justice, viz. *He that reaps the profit should also bear the expence*, or to this purpose, and certainly this maxim may very properly be applied to the case in hand. Why should the English NorthAmericans support an army to be stationed in Canada, or Pensacola and Mobile, any more than an army which is stationed in our other new conquests on the coasts of Guinea? for by the latter they gain more than by the former, and surely their having spent much blood and treasure in conquering those colonies, and adding them to the British dominion, can never be urged as a reason for their spending all the treasure they have, or rather all they ever shall have, in preserving them. It appears equally improper for us to tax our English North American colonies for the support of an army to be stationed among themselves; because such an army is no way necessary there, but, on the contrary, must prove very injurious. If a standing force be necessary in these colonies, it must be for the purposes of the civil magistrate, viz. preserving peace, and executing justice. But

as our several colonies have a compleat legislature, subordinate to that of Great-Britain, which has a power of forming militias, raising troops, &c. and as they ought to be the best judges of their own wants, it would seem natural to leave the affair of regular troops to their own option, to be raised and paid as they shall find most convenient, or not to be raised at all, unless it be requisite.—A few there have been, so little acquainted with the true state of our American colonies, as to suppose that a standing army is necessary there, even to preserve the obedience of our English subjects to the crown of Great-Britain; but nothing can argue greater ignorance, as our colonists have hitherto appeared the most loyal of all his majesty's subjects, and no man can be so wicked as to suppose that our ministry will ever premeditate such schemes of oppression as may shake that loyalty, and enable him to foresee that troops may be necessary. Whoever recollects that our colonies were in general planted by people who fled from England and Scotland, to escape the civil and religious persecution of a former family, which God in mercy to this nation has banished, may see an obvious reason why these colonists should continue inviolably and regularly attached to His present Majesty, and his illustrious family.—But we need not inquire into causes, while modern facts give ample testimony to this truth posterity will hardly believe, concerning our colonists, that when danger was far enough from
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their borders, and so many of their youth destroyed in battle, that volunteers were not to be raised by any means ; rather than the progress of His Majesty's arms should be retarded, they made laws to impress their sons and brethren by thousands into the service. This was always done upon the first notice of His Majesty's pleasure, signified by some minister of State : and if this people's loyalty may yet be suspected, there never can any confidence be placed in subjects ; since hitherto every appearance of loyalty has certainly been in favour of the colonists. If a standing army should unfortunately be quartered among our English colonies in North America, it will prove the cause of a double tax, the most grievous of which has been little attended to.

Our colonists can only flourish by industry, temperance, and frugality, the moment they forsake these virtues, they must cease to be profitable either to themselves or Great Britain ; an ancient kingdom that has an established commerce may sustain a little vanity, yet the most opulent kingdoms have at length been crushed under this weight, and Britain herself is sensibly injured by her dissipated sons ; what must become of an infant colony that has no trade but with Great-Britain, and is obliged to pay the balance, which is always against her, by an extraordinary share of diligence. If the inhabitants of this colony should be corrupted in their morals, if they should learn
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dissipation and idleness from an army that has nothing to do, if their sons and daughters should become less frugal or less chaste by the conversation of men born to affluence, accustomed to the vices of an old country and trained up in the army, I fear, if such things should happen to an infant colony, must not population be retarded, and the inhabitants soon become unable to pay their debts, and thence useless subjects to Great Britain ?

The third reason that I have heard given for the Stamp-act, shall now be considered, viz. *Great Britain being involved in debt, and loaded with taxes, it is proper her colonies should support some share of the Burthen.* As this reason has the greatest air of propriety, and doubtless had some influence on our late ministry, I shall take the more notice of it, especially as an answer to it brings me to the chief purpose of this letter, and what I proposed at the first to demonstrate, which was this. *It is for the interest of Great-Britain that the Stamp-act in North America be repealed.* If I should be able to prove this, every other argument would be immediately answered, for there might chance to be a case in which it would be cruel and unjust for us to tax a colony, even tho' we could be profited thereby, yet certainly, if that very tax were *injurious* to ourselves, it would be on every account wrong to establish it. And however our nation may be loaded with debt, if the Stamp-act should prove injurious to Great Britain,

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it must increase and not diminish the burden. Without looking forward to a great distance, and mentioning every probable consequence of the American Stamp-act, it must immediately injure Great Britain, by hurting her trade with the colonies: the extent of this injury we shall presently consider. There are two ways by which our trade with the colonies may be affected. The colonists may prove *unwilling* or *unable* to support this trade; in either case, it must be ruined; and *both* are like to be the consequence of a Stamp-act. It has never been counted either for the honor or interest of any legislature to grieve the subject, it is generally hurtful, and sometimes dangerous to grieve them universally, and probably no act ever created such universal disquiet as the Stamp-act does in America. It is vain to say that any danger can possibly arise at present from our colonists endeavouring to resist the Stamp-act by force, they are neither able nor desirous to contend with their mother-country, they know that we have troops enough on the continent to vex them, and could soon visit them with a fleet that might blow them to atoms, nor does it appear that one person of note in the colonies ever thought of resistance, tho' some people, ever pleased with calumnies and mischief, would fondly construe some rude efforts of the common people into premeditated rebellion, in order to exasperate our government against the unfortunate colonists, with the pleasing prospect

of seeing our hands imbrued in the blood of our children. But it must prove fortunate for the colonists that our government is too just and humane not to redress their complaints, if this should seem for the general good, notwithstanding the imprudent conduct of a few of their ignorant people. A nation which has lately given laws to Europe will never make a point of honor to chastise a few peasants. But to return from this digression, it is undoubtedly very easy for us to force the Americans to comply with the Stamp-Act.

But no fleet or army can make them *willing*; there is no argument so *decisive* as that from the muzzle of a gun, and yet there is none less *persuasive*. The Americans must always judge according to their own capacities, in spite of our troops; and at present they certainly judge, that the parliament of Great-Britain has no right, natural or acquired, to tax her colonists: they may be mistaken, but that very mistake must injure our trade, and must produce the more fatal effects, the greater appearance of reason there is on their side. They say, this act *deprives* them of their most valuable *charter-privilege*, being taxed by their own representatives, that however trifling we may count this circumstance, they have purchased their privileges at the expence or risque of every thing that is dear to mankind: their fathers, in hopes of enjoying them, endured every kind of danger and toil in that wilderness, where thousands were de-

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stroyed with the sword, and the rest worn out with hardships are gone to sleep; that if their children should now be deprived of those privileges, posterity will be cautious how they encounter dangers to aggrandize the British nation.—Unhappy colonists! destined to misfortunes at all events: if they are not vigorous and successful, they must perish by famine or the sword; if they are successful and prosperous, they must be taxed beyond the utmost farthing, by men in a distant part of the world. It may be replied, that the colonies did not all obtain by charter the exclusive privilege of taxing themselves: but they say, it would not follow that the parliament of Great-Britain had a right to tax them; on the contrary, though their charters did not secure this privilege to them, it would be improper for the parliament to take that advantage. The matter should only be determined by the laws and spirit of the British constitution. — Their charters were granted by Kings, and it is universally known, that a British King may not, that he cannot deprive his subjects of their liberties. We have certain constitutional *Magna Charta* privileges so inviolable and sacred, that every endeavour of the sovereign to diminish them would be void and null. Britons are taught to believe so on this side the Atlantic; they would be miserable if this truth should be called in question. Why should *British Americans* have different sensations and judgment?

Celum

Cælum non animum mutant, qui trans mare currunt.

Doubtless, any attempts appearing from any American charter to deprive the subject of constitutional privileges, will ever be deemed unjust by a British parliament : perhaps no such attempts have been made. I am not perfectly acquainted with all the charters ; but it was proper to mention the circumstance, as some of these charters were granted by a family that was apt to despise the privileges of the subject. I believe that a British King may dispense with some obligations in the subjects, but cannot enjoin any that are repugnant to our *Magna Charta*—however that be, the colonists say, they desire no dispensations, nor any liberties greater than their fellow subjects in Great Britain, to be taxed by their own representatives, *and only by them*, a privilege which nature, or rather God and nature has granted them, though they had no Charter ; that depriving them of this privilege would be a cruel precedent ; and by the way, it may have troublesome consequences. To elucidate this matter, let us suppose it a settled rule, that the British parliament is ever to tax our American plantations, let us carry this rule forward a few years, and see how it must apply.

At present the British subjects in North America, are at least two millions. It is evident from accurate calculations, that they double their number

once every eighteen years,* without including the additions they receive from other counties. Let us suppose them only to double in twenty years, then in so short a time as forty years they must be eight millions, and twenty years more, perhaps twenty five years will make them sixteen millions. The inhabitants of Great Britain are hardly seven millions, and we don't increase, except that our commerce with North America has lately increased our numbers. Now I should be pleased to hear by what face of justice the smaller part of the British empire shall tax the greater; how the representatives of seven millions shall undertake to tax sixteen millions, whom they do not represent. The very attempt must produce such events as no good subject can anticipate without horror. It is dangerous now to establish a law which must soon be changed out of prudence; else it will in a little time, fall by its own weight, and perhaps involve the British empire in its ruin. Two Millions of men, are not to be convinced, they may be forced, but it may prove hard either to force or convince even thrice that number. Some difficulties there are which grow easy by custom, and some apparent injuries which time obliterates, but the injuries received by subjects in general, or by subject depending

* The writer saw these Calculations in the Hand of a very accurate Gentleman in Rhode Island, they included the four New England Governments, where there are the smallest addition of Foreigners though People increase rather faster than those in the most Southern Provinces, where the Inhabitants are more luxurious, less healthful and have not such popular forms of Government.

depending states from their superiors, are not of this nature, like an unwieldy Burthen they grow more irksome the longer they are supported or like a barbed arrow, they stick deeper and hurt more by continuance. The history of nations will inform us how many provinces and subordinate states have been lost by oppression which they found intolerable after they had been long accustomed to it. I don't mean to insinuate that a British parliament has, or ever will deliberately oppress our colonies ; but in the mean time it must be granted, that our colonists are to comfort themselves with hope alone, for they have no security of moderate taxes, while they are not their own taxers. The maxim in Great Britain, that a subject should only be taxed by his own representatives, is evidently founded on justice, for when we are taxed by our representatives, in other words, when we are taxed by ourselves, we can have no temptation to go beyond what is reasonable or necessary, we know our own wants, and feel our own Burthen, and these must ever be the rule of taxation ; but a British parliament will hardly be allowed to feel for the Inhabitants of North America, we are ignorant of their abilities, or the small knowledge we have, is founded on very superficial accounts, often false ones. It is not improbable that some future parliaments might lay oppressive taxes on the colonists imagining that we may ease our own burthen by loading them. I hope

hope to prove this impossible, but if it should happen, the temptation would be dangerous. The subject of our daily Prayer is, or should be, "Lead us not into temptation." And the wisest earthly prince has taught us, 'that a bribe blinds the understanding :'' Hence I should be sorry to see any number of His Majesty's subjects tempted to oppress their fellow-subjects, at the distance of 3000 miles.

Did not the brave inhabitants of this island complain with a voice that shook the basis of our government, when they were taxed at the sole pleasure of their sovereign, and can the thing be right in America, which was wrong in Great-Britain ? Or can that be right on one side the Atlantic which was wrong on the other ? The Americans indeed are not taxed by the royal prerogative, but they are taxed by a p——t which they have not chosen, nor have they consented to be taxed by them ; and if they are taxed without and against their own consent, they do not see where the difference is, whether that tax be laid by the K—— or by the p——t.

Whether the colonists reason well or ill upon this subject, is not my business to determine ; I have only to mention facts. Their reasons are at least plausible, this discontent is universal, and may continue so while the Stamp-Act continues, and consequently must infallibly injure our trade. They will never consent to enrich us, while they think

think we oppress them ; they will never treat us with the respect due to a parent, while they think we treat them as slaves ; nor will they carry on a friendly and profitable trade with us, while they think we treat them as aliens, and load them with chains. For these reasons, I think it is our interest to repeal the Stamp-Act, rather than grieve so many good subjects, and cut off the source of our own wealth. But if any person should think the foregoing reasons are not conclusive, or that the bad effects of this act upon trade will be trifling and presently forgotten, there is another reason, which I hope will appear demonstrable : though the Americans should be willing, they will not be able to support their trade as formerly with Great-Britain, while the Stamp-Act continues in force. Various are the accounts of how much the act may produce yearly from our English colonies on the continent of America ; perhaps it may bring us 200,000*l. per annum* ; but it does not by any means follow, that Great-Britain shall reap the neat profit of 200,000*l. per annum* more than she formerly gained by her colonies ; on the contrary, I apprehend she may be a loser of pretty near that sum. To ascertain this matter, it is proper to examine all the necessary consequences of the Stamp-Act, and we find the weight of the act conspiring with the disposition of the people to injure our trade. The weight of the tax gives it a stroke which the Americans themselves cannot prevent.

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It is expressly provided, that the money to be raised by the Stamp-Act, shall be all remitted to Great-Britain in Gold or Silver only: now as the sum to be raised yearly is more than all the money now in the colonies; and as it will be difficult for them to find money enough the next year even to pay their taxes; it is impossible they should be able, at the same time, to send over large sums to our merchants for English goods.

The taxes that are paid in this island soon amount to more than the sum of our current money, yet we don't feel any inconveniencies in getting money to pay new Taxes, because the money being paid in the island, stays here and circulates to-morrow into the hands that paid it to-day, but this Rule does not apply to the colonists, for the money to be paid by taxes, is to be sent out of their country never to return, and the balance of trade being always in our Favour, they are obliged to send us cash even on that account; a precarious trade with the Spaniards being their principal source of money, and that not sufficient, even when our cutters are removed, to pay their debts with our merchants for British manufactures, much less to pay both for our stamps and manufactures. But as the stamps *must* be paid for, our manufactures must fail of course, since they *cannot* be paid for. This Misfortune seems greater, as it is perhaps the only accident that could have prevented our trade with the colonists from continuing and encreasing
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for many ages. The colonies produce all the necessities of life, and would produce all its luxuries with a little care, the inhabitants have hitherto neglected all sorts of manufacture, turning their chief Attention to husbandry. Thus, with wheat, rice, indigo, tobacco, hemp, timber, &c. they paid most of their debts. While they consumed our manufactures, their way of living was perfectly suited to our interest, who live by trade and manufactures, it was also suited to their convenience, hence they would have continued in this tract, for as they are accustomed to Husbandry, and from our New acquisitions may sustain land enough for that purpose, and as husbandry is the natural employment of all infant countries, nothing but the present violent necessity, could have turned their attention to manufactures, thus in a few years they would have required more English Goods than all we make at present in this island. The dream is pleasing, but it is like to be more than a dream, for the Stamp-act with the addition of a few Cutters, have done more in one year to promote American manufactures, than the natural progress of arts with all the additional arguments of frugality would have produced in an hundred years; not that our colonists have already felt the iron hand of necessity, but they see a Stamp-Act coming from a quarter whence they thought it could not come, perhaps another act may come close at its heels, at this rate it is time for them to *make* those articles

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that they shall never be able to *purchase*. This, at least, Sir, is more than Theory, whoever takes the trouble of enquiring, will find that our commissions from North America the last year have been almost a million short of what they usually have been ; another year must deduct another million, unless the act be repealed ; but suppose the act should continue, let us see what we shall get in return for this damage of trade, not to mention the universal uneasiness we continue to give to our fellow subjects.

The balance of trade, as was already observed, between us and our American colonies (excluding our conquests) is computed to be more than half a million *per ann.* in our favour ; by this means alone we us'd to get *all the money* that our colonists had, and if they should ever get more money, we were sure to get that also ; for proof of this I appeal to facts. The Americans always ow'd our merchants greater sums than all the current money in their country would pay ; and tho', during the late war, several millions were sent thither to pay the expences of our troops, the colonists did not retain that money, for as money increased their commissions increased, so that towards the end of the war they consumed eight or nine hundred thousand pounds worth of English goods more than at the beginning, and at the peace, they were three times as much in our debt as they had been ten years before that, nor had they money enough

then to pay the third part of that debt. As it is evident that the profits of our trade alone must have continued to bring us *all the money* our colonists should ever possess, I don't see how the Stamp Act can possibly bring us *more*, since the Americans are not able to coin money as our demands increase, nor are they like a certain tree which is said to grow stronger by heavy burthens; the consequence is plain, the more we receive for stamps, the less we shall receive for other manufactures. Let us now examine whether it be more profitable for Great Britain to receive two hundred and even three hundred thousand pounds annually by way of tax, or to receive it as the neat profit of trade with a distant country. I conceive the latter is most profitable, and this follows *a fortiori* if the riches of a nation consist in the industry and number of its inhabitants; for the case trade supposes that we obtain as much cash with the addition of industry and numbers. When Great Britain gains 300,000*l. per ann.* by her manufactures, it must be allowed that she sells to the amount of 1,500,000*. How many people may

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* We compute that the trade and manufactures of Great Britain have added at least two millions to the number of its inhabitants, then supposing that only 200,000 people are maintained by manufacturing, vending, &c. goods to the amount of 1,500,000*l.* it follows that where two millions of additional subjects are maintained, the exports of manufactures, &c. should be fifteen millions, which we suppose is much above the truth. Hence it follows that we must lose more than two hundred thousand subjects by the loss of trade, which annually brings us 300,000*l. per Ann.* especially if that sum be gained by manufactures.

be employed in making, vending and exporting goods to the value of a million and a half, also in receiving and selling the several species of returns for these goods, and in providing victuals for all those manufacturers, porters, merchant-ship carpenters, and sailors? By comparing the increase of our nation with that of our manufactures, I suppose it may employ two hundred thousand people at least. On which supposition the account is thus stated :

Continue the Stamp-Act and we shall receive 300,000l. per ann. into our treasury, but we must injure our trade, and lose two hundred thousand subjects, who being industrious people, are now the bulwark, support and riches of this nation.

Repeal the Stamp-act, and we shall also receive 300,000l. per ann. not all in our treasury, but in the hands of the traders and industrious people in this island, and we shall save two hundred thousand of our best subjects from inevitable perdition.

To the above account may be added, what all the subjects we save by the encouragement of trade must pay in this Island, and the Loss of them would make a considerable deduction from the annual sum paid to the government. But the loss of subjects we shall sustain by this act is not to be confined to Great Britain ; our colonies must suffer also ; they have hitherto received great additions from Germany and other kingdoms ; Pennsylvania

sylvania alone is said to contain thirty thousand Germans, who are, without exception, the most frugal, temperate, and industrious people in North America ; they fled thither from oppression, in hopes of becoming freemen, and having some hand in legislature, and the disposal of their own estates ; but strangers may think the times are now changed, and may incline to stay at home and be tax'd by their own princes, instead of going to America to be tax'd by a distant Parliament. Nor is this the only loss our colonies may sustain ; the diligence and industry of the present inhabitants are also in danger of failing, in consequence of the Stamp-Act, for while nothing tends to promote the happiness, industry, wealth and numbers of any people so much as perfect freedom, nothing produces the contrary effects so much as giving them reason to think they have lost their freedom, and that all their possessions depend on a precarious footing.

Altho' some of our fellow-subjects have treated the Americans with great freedom and contempt, yet it should be remembered that Britain owes her present importance and power to them alone ; witness the vast cities along the coast of England and Scotland, which are sprung from contemptible villages only by the American trade, and should that trade unfortunately be ruined, they must return to their former contemptible state, and this may be the consequence of a Stamp Act, instead
of

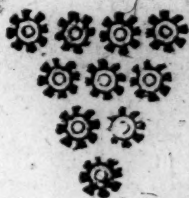
of that additional treasure which was at first expected.

As dark scenes are always disagreeable, I should not desire you to anticipate the light in which Great Britain may appear fifty years hence, if our trade with the colonies should not even continue to increase instead of decreasing ; but I would just observe that we have at this instant no other trade in the world that can be depended on ; the French have rivalled and underfold us in every port of Europe ; the kingdom of Portugal, the last and best market where we could trade to advantage, is just now giving us presages of what we may soon expect from that quarter ; we may complain of these misfortunes, though perhaps it may not be in our power to prevent them. But the loss of our American trade may be prevented, and by this trade alone, if properly encouraged, Great Britain may continue the mistress of the world, but if that should accidentally be injured, or cut off, by our present administration, Great Britain must receive a wound that can never be healed.

In fine, Sir, I have endeavoured to prove that our English subjects on the continent of America are very little in our debt.---That if the debt were much greater, we should recover no part of it by the late Stamp Act, on the contrary,---That we shall lose, instead of gaining by that tax, because the colonists being universally discontent, not without some appearance of reason, will no longer consume

consume our manufactures, and even though they were desirous of consuming them as formerly, they cannot possibly pay for them under so heavy a tax, but whatever sums we receive in the way of tax, we shall lose at least as much in the way of trade, and with this immense loss of trade we shall sustain a similar loss of our best subjects. Therefore *Repealing the Stamp-Act* is the most probable way of securing the strength, increase and riches of Great Britain and America. If I have succeeded in this proof a longer letter is not requisite, if otherwise it would be improper.

I am, &c.



continue our manifestations, and even though they
were better of, continuing them as formerly,
they cannot possibly pay for them under so heavy
tax, but whatever loss we receive in the way of
tax, we shall lose at least as much in the way of
rent, and this is a permanent loss of ours. There-
fore, a change in our policy is essential. There-
fore, we must be prepared to meet the new propo-
sitions of the Government. It is not in
the power of the Government to do what it is not re-
quired to do. It is not in the power of the Govern-
ment to do what it is not required to do.



I am, Sir,